

**SPRING 2025**

# **CHES Homeless** **OPENING DOORS** **TO INDEPENDENCE**



**A note from Rob Saggs**  
**CEO, CHES Homeless**



We realise that we may not have been in touch recently and that is because for the last 9 months we have been developing one of our existing sites from a 9-bed property into a new style of self-contained accommodation for homeless adults. It has been a huge project and we are so grateful for the support we have received from our supporters and the local community.



We are really excited to have had the official opening of our new Turning Point project, which during this month will have its first residents begin their journey.

The project has had so many businesses, individuals and trust making bodies turn this dream into a reality. We are privileged to be opening the doors to our clients on such an innovative and stunning new style of homeless housing.

Each homeless person's story is different, with several contributing factors leading to a life on the streets. Many individuals have a range of complex needs and may have come from chaotic backgrounds, often stemming back to childhood or from abuse, relationship breakdown and/or the loss of employment.

All these scenarios have the potential to result in mental health issues and/or addictions, which can spiral into a seemingly never-ending cycle often involving trauma and impacting negatively on an individual's ability to seek help.

We care for the vulnerable and homeless in our society, respecting their need for safety and dignity and working with them to help rebuild their lives from a positive foundation.



## **OUR MISSION**

CHES SEEKS TO  
ENSURE THAT PEOPLE  
WHO FIND THEMSELVES  
HOMELESS ARE  
SUPPORTED IN WAYS  
THAT ENABLE THEM TO  
MOVE FORWARD  
PURPOSEFULLY AND IN  
GOOD HEALTH

With Chelmsford being in the top 10% most expensive places to live in the country, homelessness is still on the increase. Certain groups are more likely to be at risk of becoming homeless because of other factors, such as low income, lack of family support and poor mental or physical health.

Homelessness typically occurs after all other avenues of intervention have been explored and yet homelessness has still not been able to be prevented, making the work of CHES a vital provision within our community.

CHES is committed to doing all we can to support our homeless community and has been able to increase our provision over the past 4 years from 32 to 80+ bedspaces as we continue to explore more opportunities.



## OUR TURNING POINT PROJECT



We have recently developed one of our existing sites in Chelmsford to incorporate 24 self-contained modular homes to support people moving away from entrenched rough sleeping.

We are helping people to take the first step to addressing the issues which resulted in their experience of homelessness, supporting them to make lasting and positive change in a significantly improved living style.

With financial support from the 'Single Homeless Accommodation Programme' (SHAP) and through additional fundraising efforts, we successfully raised more than £3.1 million allowing us to significantly upgrade the accommodation which previously catered for 9 people, to 24 beautiful Duohaus homes with Support and Wellbeing staff on site.





The pictures below show the spacious living style of the new accommodation, fully equipped kitchen/lounge area, separate utility area and bathroom. Some of the ground floor units have been adapted for individuals with mobility issues.



There is also a green area outside, trees to the front and meadow planting to the rear of the property. The original office and communal kitchen and meeting space are still available for those that prefer to join in with group meals and activities.

Whilst this property is outside of Chelmsford it is on a main bus route and CHES will be running a shuttle service into town.





We were honoured to hold the official opening in early April by Mrs Jennifer Tolhurst, the Lord Lieutenant of Essex and have other guests and VIP's in attendance, to help us celebrate this milestone for CHES Homeless. We are excited to have this facility receive it's first resident within the next few weeks.

**We are now running a fundraising campaign for £108,000 to finance solar power at the site and make it more energy efficient. If you would like to donate to this portion of the project please use the qr code or visit [www.chesshomeless.org/turning-point](http://www.chesshomeless.org/turning-point)**



## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Chelmsford Awards for Voluntary Service in collaboration with The Mayor of Chelmsford, saw dedicated volunteers across Chelmsford receive a special thanks for their work to support local charities through a presentation and celebratory tea.

A long-service recognition certificate was presented at this year's Awards to CHES Homeless volunteer Jane Shelley.



Jane has volunteered for over 30 years, first starting at a soup kitchen in the early 1990s and church halls during the winter months to provide those rough sleeping with food and shelter.

You can read more about the awards at <https://citylife.chelmsford.gov.uk/posts/mayor-of-chelmsford-celebrates-selfless-local-volunteers>.



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Every day, we meet volunteers from all walks of life, yet are still humbled by the scale and scope of time and talents that people give to so many different causes, despite challenging times.

It's both an honour and a great source of pride that Chelmsford CVS is able to recognise some of the incredible volunteering that takes place in our community. Thank you to every one.

Lorraine Jarvis,  
Chief Officer, Chelmsford CVS

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## OUR SUPPORT SERVICES

With the significant uplift in our property portfolio and bedspaces comes the need to ensure we have the skilled and experienced staff to support the needs of our clients and manage our increased capacity.

Through 1-1 support and mental wellbeing sessions we can build a relationship of trust with the individuals we are supporting. Dedicated support allows our clients to address the root causes of their mental health issues and the reason they became homeless, helping them to find a path to recovery and change.

Evidence shows that having processed trauma, increased self-confidence and making positive steps towards employment, people can cement a positive future, maintain accommodation, and find a long-term route away from homelessness.



# OUR OUTREACH TEAM

CHES Homeless run an Outreach service covering 8 Essex districts including Chelmsford, Brentwood, Rochford, Maldon, Epping, Castle Point, Uttlesford and Braintree. We are also exploring avenues to increase our housing provision in one of these local authorities.



## EPHING CASE STUDY

AB is a 54 year-old man who has spent 13 years in a high security prison. On release he felt at risk in the London borough he was originally from and decided to move closer to his elderly mother who has care needs. Unfortunately, he was unable to live with her due to restrictions on her tenancy.

AB understood that he was not entitled to apply for housing in Epping and set up an encampment in the forest where he lived for 7 months. He engaged well with rough sleeper welfare support, and with all referrals to services to explore his limited housing options.

In March this year we assisted him to apply for supported accommodation in Harlow. He attended the assessment and was successful in gaining a self-contained flat.

CHES supported AB to obtain furniture through the essential living fund, and a laptop from VAEF digital share which helps him to manage his bills. He has been very positive in his feedback to tenancy support and is determined to rebuild his life and independence. He says that he was invisible and hopeless, and we offered him help without judgment.

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**Our Outreach Team are part of the Streetlink service covering alerts for rough sleepers within 24 hours. We provide emergency items such as food, sleeping bags, warm clothes etc.**

**If you would like to donate items for rough sleepers you can find a list of our current needs at [www.chesshomeless.org/donate](http://www.chesshomeless.org/donate)**



# OUR SERVICE USERS



**There is no such thing as a 'generic' homeless adult. Our service users come from all types of situations and walks of life, are young and old, and have experienced circumstances that caused them to become homeless.**

**We care for the homeless and those at risk of homelessness, respecting their need for safety and dignity. We promote a sense of security, self-worth and acceptance of the diversity of the individuals we serve.**

**We aim to offer temporary accommodation and 1-1 support to help them regain control of their lives and move on to live independently. Your support enables us to fulfil our mission by offering them the opportunity they need without judgement and to know that this is possible.**

## IMPACT STORY

>>>> came to CHES after suffering in an abusive relationship with her partner of 18 years. Having left one refuge where he came and attacked her with a knife, she moved into a CHES property and wanted to tell us some of her story.

“ CHES is the one place I felt safe and supported. Having a Support Worker made me feel valued and I meant I was able to regain my confidence so I can now move on with my life. I was a Carer for over 20 years working with patients suffering from dementia and learning disabilities, and now feel like I am in place where I can go back to work and help others again. I loved taking part in the Wellbeing activities at CHES such as arts & crafts or days out with other residents, and I was also able to take a couple of accredited courses which will help me going forward.

CHES is a wonderful place so my advice to anyone in this situation is to get help as it is there for you.



“ CHES HELPED ME BE A BETTER PERSON AND TO MOVE ON WITH MY LIFE ”



## OUR FUNDING

Whilst we receive some statutory financial support, we rely annually on the financial contribution made by individuals, charitable trusts and foundations and local companies to be able to provide vital services for the homeless and vulnerably housed in Essex.

With increasing numbers of homeless people in our local community some of whom are living on the streets, it is vital that we can continue to provide secure and safe dwellings and support services.

Your contribution towards these costs enables us to do so and we are grateful for any financial support you may be able to offer. Find out how to donate below.

## 2025 EVENTS

JULY 11 : Volunteer BBQ - venue tbc

JULY 19 : Chelmsford Gospel Community Choir @ LIFE Church, Chelmsford

JULY 24 : Quiz Night at Voodoo Keller

SEPTEMBER 14 : London to Brighton Cycle (team members needed)

OCTOBER : Volunteer Open Evening

OCTOBER 17 : CHESS BIG Sleepout @ Chelmsford Cathedral

DECEMBER : Santa Sleigh with Chelmsford Lions Club

We are often seeking volunteers to help at these events or fundraisers to take part - if you feel this is something you are interested in or you have other ideas for fundraising do please get in touch at [fundraising@chesshomeless.org](mailto:fundraising@chesshomeless.org) for more information.

## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

**DONATE** : [chesshomeless.org/donate](https://chesshomeless.org/donate) or use this qr code

**VOLUNTEER**: Find out more [chesshomeless.org/volunteer](https://chesshomeless.org/volunteer)

**RAISE AWARENESS** : stay up to date and share our social posts



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